Demand No. VI—Excise.—(*contd.*)—Rs. 2,84,814.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Sir, I move for the grant of Rs. 2,84,814 under 'VI-Excise.' This amount is less than the budget estimate of this year, but is slightly in excess of the revised budget of this year by Rs. 1,178. This small excess is due solely to the opening of a special head under "Transport, etc., charges of opium and ganja" which till now were included under the head "Advance repayable". The items of expenditure are the same as those of the present year, and, therefore, do not call for any special remarks.

However, I take this opportunity of explaining the Excise policy of the State as much criticism was levelled against it by some of the Hon'ble Members on the other side during the general discussion of the budget. I am sure that their criticism would have softened down very much, if all the materials before me had been available to them. I have no quarrel with the Hon'ble Members in their view that drink is an evil. But this drink evil is not of recent origin but has existed from centuries if not ages past. It has, therefore, taken deep root, and cannot be eradicated all at once. And as I understand the Hon'ble Members, they are not for absolute prohibition now, but their view appears to be that the evil should be gradually eradicated. I have stated before this House on more than one occasion that the policy of the Durbar is one of gradual prohibition. Certain measures are also adopted to achieve this result. The question is whether these measures lead to the furtherance of this object.

Our Excise policy is modelled entirely on the policy of the Madras Government, which again is modelled on the policy of the Government of India. The principle laid down by the Government of India are that any extension of the habit of drinking is to be discouraged, (2) that taxation is to be as high as possible without encouraging illicit practices, and (3) subject to these considerations a maximum revenue is to be raised from a minimum consumption.

This policy of maximum revenue and minimum consumption has been the target of attack by some of the Hon'ble Members on the other side, and they seem to think that the policy adopted is maximum revenue and maximum consumption. I am sure that such a view is due to a misconception and also to the absence of proper materials before them. Tax began to be levied upon intoxicants as a means of controlling and reducing consumption, and it is with this same object it is increased from time to time. Generally speaking the increase in tax has a marked tendency to reduce consumption, but at the same time it

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

leads to the increase in Government revenue. It will be my endeavour to show whether in the working of our policy we have succeeded in achieving this result.

The system in force originally in the Madras Presidency was one of farming, and it was this system that was inherited by the British Administration. Under this system, the monopoly of manufacture and sale of liquor in a certain area was granted in return for the payment of a lump sum, the monopolist being allowed to manufacture how and where he pleased, to open as many shops as and at whatever places he pleased and to sell at whatever price he chose. The existing Madras system, which is centered in the contract distillery and the tree-tax system, began only after the middle of the 19th century, that is to say, after the passing of Act 1 of 1886 (The Madras Abkari Act). Under this system there were (1) in regard to country spirits, the separation of the privileges of the manufacture and vend and the introduction of the auction sale of shops, (2) in regard to toddy the levy of tree-tax and the issue of licenses for sale of toddy in shops, and (3) the organisation of a strong Government preventive force, separate from the ordinary Excise and Revenue establishments.

The system that is really in force in Madras is what is called the system of "High License", which aims at the elimination of the evils of drink traffic by gradually increasing the tax on liquor until high taxation puts its price beyond the reach of the ordinary consumer. It is a temperance measure and is regarded as the best by many earnest students of the drink problem. High license has been held to fulfil all the objects which have been laid down as the essentials of a good licensing law. It prevents excessive consumption. It secures adequate police supervision and enforcement of rules regarding closure, etc. It facilitates collection of revenue and helps to check drunkenness and the sale of illicit liquor. Its proper application has resulted in a great decrease in the number of shops and the reduction of drunkenness.

In our State also, the system originally in force was the farming system. The Excise system was introduced for the 1st time in 1087 by the introduction of the independent shop system and the establishment of the Central distillery at Trichur under the supervision of a trained officer. The manufacture and vend of country spirits were separated, toddy and arrack shops were sold separately, and duty began to be levied on each gallon of arrack issued from the distillery. This was in the northern taluks of Trichur, Talappalli and Chittur, which adjoin the British Malabar. In 1088 the tree-tax system was intro-

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

duced in those three taluks with regard to the tapping for fermented toddy. In 1090 the independent shop system with regard to arrack and in 1092 with regard to toddy, with its concomitant of tree-tax, were introduced in the southern taluks, which adjoin Travancore. Thus since 1092 the system of independent shops came into vogue, both as regards toddy and arrack throughout the whole State following the system prevailing in the Madras Presidency. Here also the system really in force since then is the system of 'High License'.

Several measures were adopted by the Madras Government to effectuate their policy and almost all those measures were adopted by our State also. The most important of the measures are the following :—

1. *The gradual raising of duty on arrack and also of tree-tax.*—The present rate of duty in the Malabar district for arrack is Rs. 8—7—0 for proof gallon and the present rate of tree-tax there is Rs. 4-8-0 for cocoanut tree, Rs. 9 for sago palm, both for each half-year, and Rs. 3 for palmyra tree per annum. In our State also both the duty and the tree-tax were being gradually raised. I shall take the case of arrack from 1095. In that year the duty in the southern taluks was Rs. 3-2-0 and in the northern taluks Rs. 7-8-0 per proof gallon. It was increased to Rs. 5-10-0 and Rs. 8-7-0 in 1096. So we reached the rate of duty prevalent in British Malabar so far as our northern taluks are concerned in 1096. Since then there has been no change in the rate of duty in those taluks till now. But for the next year we have increased it to Rs. 8 12-0 on account of the lower rate we obtained for the price of arrack by the new distillery contract, in order to equalise the price of arrack there with that prevailing in the adjacent British territories. The arrack duty in the southern taluks in 1097 was Rs. 3-12-0 and it continued to be so till 1100 because in the adjacent Travancore territory the duty was not higher. From 1100 to 1102 it was Rs. 4-1-0 and in 1102 it was raised to Rs. 4-6-0 and in 1103 to Rs. 4-11-0. It has been raised to Rs. 5 for next year. I may note that our rates in the southern taluks is slightly in excess of the rates prevailing in the adjacent Travancore territories. Coming to the tree-tax, till 1097, the rate of tree-tax in the southern taluks was very low, being only 6 as. per cocoanut tree, 8 as. per sago palm and 4 as. per palmyra tree, which were the same as those for trees for jaggery tapping. From 1098 there has been a steady increase in these rates. In 1098 the rates were raised to Re. 1 per cocoanut tree, Rs. 1-8-0 per sago palm, and 12 as. per palmyra tree. In 1099 these were raised to Rs. 2, Rs. 4 and 12 as. respectively. Till 1100 all the trees in the southern

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

taluks were licensed annually. From 1100 the licensing with regard to cocoanut and sago trees were made half-yearly. The rates in 1100 were Rs. 3 per cocoanut tree, Rs. 6 for sago palm and as. 12 per palmyra tree. These were raised to Rs. 4, Rs. 8, Rs. 1-8-0 in 1101, to Rs. 5, Rs. 10, and Rs. 2 in 1102 and to Rs. 6, Rs. 12 and Rs. 2 in 1103 respectively. Since 1097 till and including 1103 the tax in the northern taluks has been Rs. 6 per cocoanut tree, Rs. 12 per sago tree and Rs. 2 per palmyra tree.

The reason why the tree-tax has been very low in the southern taluks was that till 1100 it was the farming system that was in vogue in the adjoining Travancore territory. From next year the tree-tax for the whole State has been raised to Rs. 7 per cocoanut tree, Rs. 14 per sago tree and Rs. 3 per palmyra tree. Thus, what was 6 as., 8 as. and 4 as. 6 years ago has been raised to Rs. 7, Rs. 14 and Rs. 3 per each cocoanut tree, sago palm and palmyra tree respectively. And when the rates in the southern and northern taluks became uniform, which is in this year, the tax for the whole State has been increased for the next year.

2. *Reduction in the number of shops.*—The number of toddy and arrack shops in 1092 were 574 and 293 respectively. There has been reduction in the number almost every year, and their number for next year is only 418 and 223 respectively. Thus there has been a reduction of 27·1% in the case of toddy shops and nearly 24% in the case of arrack shops. The number of shops this year is 429 toddy shops and 230 arrack shops. So their number has been still further reduced for next year.

3. *Reduction in the strength of country liquor.*—In the Madras Presidency the issue strength was gradually reduced from 20° U. P. to 30° U. P., thence to 32° U. P. and thence again to 35° U. P., which is the general issue strength now. Here also before 1092 arrack was issued even at 20° U. P. and the strength was gradually reduced to 35° U. P. and 60° U. P. which is the present strength.

4. *Limitation of possession.*—In the Madras Presidency the limit of private possession without license is one gallon with regard to toddy and 6 drams with regard to arrack. Here also the rule is the same with regard to arrack, but with regard to toddy we are ahead of the Madras Government, for the limit of private possession with regard to toddy is only half a gallon. There can be no doubt that this has a most marked effect in checking consumption.

5. *Hours of sale.*—In the Madras Presidency the closing hour is now fixed at 8 p. m. for all kinds of shops. The same rule prevails here also.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

6. *Imposition of conditions in the licenses for discouraging attraction.*—The license conditions both in the Madras Presidency and here now prohibit gambling and entertainments in shops, sale to drunkards, children and persons under 18 years of age, and also to adult women.

I shall next examine the result of these measures. I shall begin with the year 1097 as the tree-tax began to be steadily raised only from 1098. I shall first deal with the tree-tax, and in doing so, I shall take the figures for the whole State first. In 1097, the number of trees tapped for F. T. was 64,367. It fell to 60,879 in 1098—there was an appreciable fall of nearly 3,500 trees. In 1099 the number was only 58,395, a further fall, in 1100 the number is seen to be 75,196, which would look like an increase, but this is not really an increase as the cocoanut trees and sago trees which were licensed annually till then began to be licensed half-yearly from that year. The apparent increase, therefore, is not a real increase. The number in 1101 was 74,616, a further fall. In 1102 the number was 76,479, an increase no doubt. But in this year the number till the 15th of this month was only 71,864, a large decrease. Thus, even taking the number of trees in the whole State, we find a steady decrease from 1098 except in one year. But if we take the number of trees in the southern taluks, where alone there was a gradual increase of tree-tax, we find a steady decrease throughout. In 1097 the number of trees was 38,756. It fell to 32,646 in 1098, and again fell to 30,573 in 1099. For the reason mentioned above, the number in 1100 is 48,648. However, it fell to 48,066 in 1101 and again fell to 47,417 in 1102. This year the number till the 15th of this month was only 42,079, a huge fall. Next I shall take the quantity of arrack consumed. I shall deal with the quantity for the whole State. The consumption in 1098 was 41,108·98 proof gallons. (Southern taluks alone 32,019·38.) In 1099 it fell to 40,493·53 proof gallons. (Southern taluks alone 31,787·43.) In 1100 the quantity further fell to 33,274·80 proof gallons. (Southern taluks alone 25,227·15 proof gallons.) There was some rise in 1101 and 1102, the quantity in 1101 being 37,542·82 (southern taluks alone 29,569·6) and in 1102, 40,617·20. (Southern taluks alone 30,375·15.) Though there was some increase, the quantity has not gone up to that consumed in 1098. Thus, when compared with 1098, certainly there was a fall in consumption.

The above will show that there was a marked decrease in the consumption of liquor since we began to raise the duty of arrack and tree-tax and reduce the number of shops and the introduction of other measures mentioned above. In this con-

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

nection it must be remembered that there are several big festivals in the State, of which two at least stand in bold relief, namely, the Trichur *Pooram* and the Cranganur *Bharani*, for which people from foreign countries flock in thousands and lakhs. A very great quantity of liquor is consumed by such foreigners. To this should be added the large influx of people who go over to Cochin on account of its commercial importance almost every day. These also use a great quantity of our liquor. The suppression of malpractices will also tend to an extent to an increase in licit consumption. When we take these, and also the steady increase of population every year into consideration, I have no doubt whatever that the Hon'ble Members on the other side will agree with me that there has been a steady reduction in consumption on account of the measures adopted by the Government, and that but for the adoption of those measures there would have been an enormous increase in consumption. No doubt, there has been some increase in revenue from liquor during these years, but that is due mainly to the increase of duty and the tree-tax. I, therefore, make bold to say that we have achieved certain measure of success in following our policy of gradual prohibition.

In 1921 an Excise Committee was appointed in the Madras Presidency, and they submitted a report in December 1925. In Travancore also an Excise Committee was appointed in 1923, and their report was published in 1925. The Madras Government passed orders in September 1926 but it does not appear that any orders have been passed as yet by the Travancore Government. In March 1926 (1101) our Government also appointed an Excise Committee in deference to the wishes of some of the non-official Members of this Council. That committee submitted their report to the Government on the 6th of Vrischigam 1103. It is under the consideration of the Darbar.

I request that the grant may be passed.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—On a point of information. Under 'Transport charges, etc., Ganja' an increase is found. May I know why?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—There is no increase. There was no head last year for 'transport charges, etc., Ganja.'

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—In the revised estimate, it is only Rs. 2,000.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—This item was opened not in the beginning of the year but only about the middle of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

the year was this separate head was opened, and, therefore, it was found Rs. 2,500 might be necessary for that portion of the year after the revised budget estimate was submitted.

Motion No. 1.

Mr. P. C. Chanchan.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 9,913 for "contribution to Establishment" by Re. 1.*

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. സി. ചാഞ്ചൻ.—ഞാൻ പിൻവലിക്കുന്നു.

(*The motion was considered withdrawn.*

Motion No. 2.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 9,913 for "contribution to Establishment" by Re. 1.*

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, there is a toddy shop in Ollur on the southern side of the Chalakkudi road. It abuts the road. There is hardly one or two *koles* of distance between the road and the shop. There is sufficient space behind that shop to locate it. The people of the place requested the Superintendent of Excise to have it shifted to three or four *dannus* away from the road. Even that modest request of the public was rejected by the Superintendent of Excise. My submission is that this is not consistent with the policy that is now preached by the Government. Anybody who has passed that way would have felt the inconvenience and the difficulty of crossing through the crowd of drunkards. It is only to bring to the notice of the Government this fact that I have tabled this motion.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—It is true there is a toddy shop there. It was on the southern side of the road. It will be on the northern side next year. The shop was not removed because it is not situated in a crowded locality. It is far away from the Church and also from the Christian streets. When I went there I found that the shop-keeper had already put up a shed. Well, I have been trying my very best to see that so far as possible shops are not located objectionally near the road. I shall do so hereafter also. I shall see that new liquor shop sites are not put up very close to the road-side.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Thank you.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Has sanction already been given for putting up a shop there next year?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—No sanction has been given.

The shop-keepers want my approval in selecting sites. But the fact is that before my approval, Inspectors will recommend the approval of the sites, and when I go to the sites, the shop-keepers will have invested large sums of money and the sheds would have been erected. So it will be very hard to ask them to remove the sheds. But I am instructing all my Inspectors that in future shop-keepers should be definitely told

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

that the sites would not be approved if they are erected very near the road where they may be conveniently erected at a respectable distance from the road. I shall certainly enforce that.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—On this assurance,.....

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—On a point of information. With reference to the Pachalam Market business, there was a shop there, and there was a proposal by the Municipality to have the shop removed to some other less frequented place, because it was situated in a very congested area in front of a school.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—That is the toddy shop which the Chairman and the Superintendent inspected. That was removed.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—Thank you, Sir.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—This year it is not located there. I was for removing it even from the very beginning. Somehow or other it was not removed last year. The site was not approved this year, and it was removed.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—On this assurance, I withdraw the motion with the consent of the House.

(*The motion was, with leave, withdrawn.*)

Motions Nos. 3—9.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 9,913 for "contribution to Establishment" by Re. 1.*

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 32,986 for "item Distillery Establishment, etc," by Re. 1.*

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,08,650 for "item Taluk Establishment" by Re. 1.*

Mr. M. K. Raman.—*To reauce the allotment of Rs. 4,000 for "transport of Opium and Ganja" by Rs. 1,500.*

Mr. M. K. Raman.—*To omit Rs. 252 for "Boat Establishment."*

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,84,814 for "Votable Charges" by Re. 1.*

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,84,814 for "Votable charges" by Re. 1.*

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—The object of my tabling this motion, Sir, is to bring before this House the cry raised in every house-told by the starving women and children of the drunkards. Sir, this drink evil—this terrible disaster-ought to be stamped out of our homes at once. Before I proceed with this important subject, I would like to get certain information from the Excise Superintendent. What is the total consumption of liquor for 1103 up-to-date?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—You mean arrack? That is answered in to-day's questions.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—You will find the answer does not

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

refer to the total quantity of arrack consumed all over the State up-to-date

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—I have not collected information up-to-date. I am sorry I have not collected the materials, because your question was sent up only a few days before the meeting

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—What I understand from the last year's budget speech made by the Hon'ble Member for Excise is that he has been trying 4 or 5 means of preventing this evil from the State. One is reduction in the number of shops. Then gradual raising of the duty; limitation of private possession without permit; and restriction of the hours of sale. All these, I am very much satisfied to find the Excise Commissioner has been carrying out. From the statistics supplied, I understand the tax for drawing fermented toddy has been very much increased from Rs. 1—8—0 in 1098 to Rs. 6 and odd up-to-date.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Rs. 7 next year.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—And also with regard to cocoanut and palmyra trees, it has been raised from one rupee to four rupees and from 12 annas to Rs. 1—8—0 respectively. This is really a very good increase indeed, and the duty of arrack has been raised from Rs. 3—2—0 per gallon in 1095 to nearly Rs. 4—1—0 up-to-date.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Rs. 5 next year.

Now it is Rs. 4-11-0 in the southern taluks.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—In the northern taluks, it is Rs. 8-7-0.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—That tallies with the present British rate. Next year it will increase to Rs. 8-12-0.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—So also the issue strength of the country arrack has been made 35^{0} and 60^{0}. The Commissioner of Excise however tell us that there is no demand for the 60 degrees stuff.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Only you are diluting the 35 issue strength arrack to 60 degrees. You add some more water.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—It ought to be so diluted always before it is issued. That is my point. In the matter of consumption of liquor, however, it has been brought out that, in spite of all these safeguards, it has been on the increase for the last two years, because from 37,542 it has come to 41 thousand and odd! if I remember right. In 1101 it was 37,542 proof gallons. In 1102, 41 thousand and odd, and subsequently also it has been on the increase.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—It may or may not be.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Up to first Mithunam it is 38 thousand and odd. By the end of Karkadagam it may come up to more than 41 thousand.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—I do not know. I cannot say. It need not necessarily go up to 1,000.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Is it likely that it will go above 41 thousand and odd, the figure for last year ?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—According to the answer tabled this morning, 38,700 and odd gallons is the consumption till the end of Mithunam. You may take it to nearly 39 thousand gallons. Taking the average for a month it works out to 3,500 and odd gallons. So in any case it will be more than that of last year

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—It need not be the average. In some months there will be very little consumption and in some months there will be increased consumption.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Then coming to the revenue derived form independent toddy shops, it has risen from Rs. 4,58,932 in 1102 to Rs. 5,21,990 according to the budget estimate. So also the amount from independent arrrck shops have risen from Rs.87,507 in 1102 to Rs.1,09,693. This shows a steady increase. It is all revenue from the drink evil.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Must necessarily be.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Temporary licenses, I understand, in 1096 amounted to 41, in 1100 it went up to 69, and I do not know what the number is in 1103.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—This year I have been very careful to refuse such licenses.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—May I know how much it was in 1102 ?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—In 1102 it came to 66. This year it is 47, a large decrease, and there will be no more such shops.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—So there is a promise to stop hereafter occasional licenses too. Now with all these restrictions put up by the Excise Commissioner with the goal of "absolute prohibition" to be achieved in the course of a few years, I understand our consumption has been only on the increase. Now, in my opinion, these measures adopted with all sorts of strictness, have not been sufficient to bring about any substantial decrease in the drink evil. The results are not as favourable as one should expect. Let us therefore seek our remedy elsewhere.

One word more with regard to taxation. In the northern and southern taluks some difference is made in the matter of taxation and duty on arrack—in the northern parts it is very high because it ought to tally with the rates in British and in the southern taluks it is low, because the Travancore rates are so. If a much bigger rate could be had in the northern parts, why not we have the same rate in the southern parts

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

also, so that more restriction may be brought to bear by raising the duty on arrack? Of course, it does not stand to reason to say that, because Travancore has not made it as high as ours, we ought not to raise the rates in the southern taluks. The issue strength of arrack ought to be only 60° and it should be strictly observed. This decrease in its power would make it less attractive.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—I do not think that it will have much effect. They will take more of it.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—I don't believe so. I have not much experience of this. Naturally when the liquor is made less powerful, people, who are addicted to drink, must find it rather a lead stuff and not worth taking in. Long-continued process of such dislikes will end in complete prohibition. That is my view. If this is adopted, there is chance for a great decrease in the drinking habit of the people. The decrease in the number of shops is not as satisfactory as it ought to have been. From 1089 there were 753 shops. It came to 467 in 1099. That is a veay big fall, but since then only 15 to 20 shops are decreasing during a period of 2 to 3 years. I think that, if a more steady decrease is made in the number of shops, as it was done from 1089 to 1099, that will be a much more effective step. The license fee for wholesale shop is Rs. 250 and it is Rs. 150 for retail shop.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—It has been raised to Rs. 200 this year.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—The license fees for wholesale shops ought to be considerably increased so that the number of whole sale shops may be decreased in the years to come.

Besides all these methods already adopted, I shall not be satisfied unless some sort of legislation too is arrived at prohibitting drink. The Punjab Legislative Council adopted a resolution in favour of local option in the year 1921 and the principle was given effect to at once. In the case of the Bombay Government they have accepted the recommendations to introduce prohibition within Municipal areas. Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal accepted prohibition as a State policy and given effect to it with more rigour than anywhere else.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Last year all the shops were re-introduced in the State. The policy of prohibition was cancelled. It was an absolute failure there.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—In 1922 in the State of Ahmednagar total prohibition was accepted and the State of Patna also followed suit. In Mysore the principle of local option has been accepted. In this connection I may quote the words of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

our Ex-Diwan Mr. Bhore :—"The statistics available show sufficiently considerable increase in the consumption of spirits during the year to postulate an increase of drinking habits. It is a matter of grave doubt if any of the remedies suggested for this evil sort of legislative prohibition are calculated to effect any permanent material reduction in its extent". I believe, if we do not take to legislative prohibition, as suggested by Ex-Diwan Mr. Bhore, there is no chance of our coming to real prohibition in the years to come.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Sir, I rise to support this motion. But, before I do so, I wish to know from the Hon'ble Member if any shops have been given this year without auction and by tender.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—No.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—May I also know whether any detection of illicit traffic has been made in the year from the Ernakulam town?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—About 30 cases: I am not quite sure.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—From where were these detections made, I mean, whether they were from private houses or coffee shops or tea shops?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—There had been detections from private houses as well as from tea shops and coffee shops and altogether it is about 30 cases.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—May I also know whether 12 shops surrounding the town on the outskirts have been auctioned this year?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Yes. The auctions are all over.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—May I know, Sir, whether any local option prevailed anywhere in the State, whether the principle of local option has been accepted anywhere in the State?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—No local option.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—May I also know whether you have restricted the quantity of liquor to be sold to women?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Liquor cannot be sold to women. It has been prohibited according to the conditions of the license issued this year. Liquor cannot be sold to women and children under 18 years of age.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Has the quantity of liquor to be sold to adults been restricted?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—No.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Sir, I support this motion. This revenue has been going steadily high. In the coming year 92,000 rupees more is budgetted on the receipts side of this revenue. Mr. S. Koder, father of the Hon'ble Member for Mattancheri, had been a liquor merchant in Cochin for a long long time, say

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

for nearly half a century, and it was his decided opinion that the more dear you make drink, the more people will take to drink. By making liquor dear, you would not be able to stamp out the evil. I shall tell you what you are doing, by making liquor dear. You are only making the poor people who take to drink pay more for it. You see, Sir, the Excise revenue this year comes tonearly Rs.11,02,900, *i.e.*, over a rupee a head of the population, and you may take away 50 per cent of the population as represening the upper classes, take 2½ lakhs away as representing the Brahmins and the Nayars and other non-drinking classes.

Dr. A. G Menon.—Nayars are drinking classes; not all.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I am very glad you join the happy band.

All that I wish to point out is that this revenue comes as a tainted vicious revenue from the very poor people at the cost of the vitality of the nation. (*Hear, hear.*) By making the vitality of the nation reduced, you are doing untold injury to the body politic, not only in this generation but in the generations to come. And this evil must be tackled by Government, if the Government desires the welfare of the people and the prosperity of future generations. Imagine the children born out of the drunkards! What amount of vitality can you have in them? The Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer will testify to the fact whether the progeny from drunkards would be as strong as the progeny from non-drunkards. If that is so, you are introducing a poison into the very womb of the mothers of the land and you are going to deteriorate the population of Cochin in the years to come. That is the evil which threatens society, and if there is a remedy possible for it, I ask you to tackle the problem with the village reconstruction that we are going to handle. I am not here to say that we can completely eradicate the drink evil. I myself like sometimes to have a little drink. (*Laughter.*) But that is not the way of looking at it. These intemperate habits make the masses weak and unsteady. We compel our children to go to school. Why? In order that the nation may be benefitted by literacy being spread throughout the country. Without compulsion, it is impossible for you to render any good to the people whose care is entrusted to you. Therefore, it is that I ask you to resort to some measures that you may approve of for reducing this evil.

Sir, I have done. This House had made only a very modest request to reduce 5 per cent of the shops. I am glad he is reducing the shops little by little and I ask him to reduce it still more next year at least by full 5 per cent. That is all I have got to say.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—എനിക്ക് രണ്ടുസംശതികം ചോദിച്ച് അറിയാനുണ്ട്. എക്സൈസ് കാര്യത്തിൽ നാം ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ നയംതന്നെ സ്വീകരിക്കണമെന്നും രാഷ്ട്രീയമായി വല്ല ബാദ്ധ്യതയും ഉണ്ടോ? അതറിഞ്ഞിട്ടുവേണം എനിക്കു ചില സംശതികം പ്രസ്താവിക്കുവാൻ.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ.—അങ്ങനെ ബാദ്ധ്യത ഉണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—തോന്നുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ? തിട്ടമറിയാൻ പാടില്ല? ഏതായാലും ബാദ്ധ്യതഉണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല അല്ലെ? അതിരിക്കട്ടെ. അമേരിക്കയിലെ മദ്യനിരോധന നയം ഫലിച്ചതായി അറിവുണ്ടോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ.—നേരിട്ടു അറിവില്ല. കടലാസിൽ വായിച്ചു അറിഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ട്. കടലാസ്സുകാർ ഫലിച്ചെന്നും ഇല്ലെന്നും രണ്ടുവിധത്തിലും പറയുന്നുണ്ട്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—ആ കാര്യത്തിൽ ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം എന്തെന്നു പറയാമൊ?

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ.—ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിനു ഇപ്പോൾ ഒരു അഭിപ്രായം പറയാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—എന്നാൽ ഞാൻ പറയാം. ഇതിൽ നാം ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ നയം സ്വീകരിക്കരുതു്. മദ്യനിരോധന നയം അവർ സ്വീകരിക്കയില്ല. അതിനെപ്പറ്റി ഇപ്പോൾ വിവരിക്കുന്നതിനു് സമയമില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ടു് നാം ഒരിക്കലും അവരുടെ നയം ഇതിൽ സ്വീകരിക്കരുതു്. പൊതുപ്പാൽ രാജ്യത്തു മദ്യനിരോധനത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു് ഒരു പരിക്ഷണം നടത്തിയതിൽ—നല്ല പരിശുദ്ധമായ ഉദ്ദേശമുള്ള ഒരു മഹാറാണി തിരുമനസ്സുകൊണ്ടു് ഒരു നല്ല നയം നടപ്പാക്കാൻ നോക്കിയിട്ടു—അവിടത്തെ കള്ളുകുടിയന്മാരും മദ്യക്കച്ചവടക്കാരും കൂടി തോല്പിച്ചു കളഞ്ഞു. ആ രാജ്യത്തെ ഒരു ഉദാഹരണമായി എടുത്തുംകൊണ്ടു് എത്ര സന്തോഷത്തോടുകൂടെയാണു്, എത്ര പ്രമാണമാക്കിയാണു്, നമ്മുടെ എക്സൈസ് മെംബർ ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു്!

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Shame, shame.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—ഇതിനേക്കാൾ മദ്യനിരോധനം വളരെ ശക്തിയായി തെളിയിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള അമേരിക്കയെപ്പറ്റി ഒരു അക്ഷരം പോലും പറയുവാൻ എക്സൈസ് മെംബർക്കു ഭാവമേയില്ല. ഒരു വലിയ ഭൂഖണ്ഡത്തിൽ—ഒരു വലിയ ഭൂഖണ്ഡമെന്നു് ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി ഞാൻ പറയുന്നു—നാം മോരുംവെള്ളം കുടിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ കള്ളുകുടിച്ചു ജീവിച്ചിരുന്ന ഒരു രാജ്യത്തു മദ്യനിരോധനം പൂർണ്ണമായി ഫലിച്ചുവെന്നു് അറിയുന്നതിനു കാലം വളരെ

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

ആയിഎങ്കിലും നമ്മുടെ എക്സൈസ് മെംബർക്കു ഒരു അഭിപ്രായം പറയുവാൻ ഇനിയും കാലമായിട്ടില്ലെന്നു പറയുന്നു. അതു എക്സൈസ് ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെണ്ടിനു വലിയ പ്രശംസാഹ്മായി ഞാൻ വിചാരിക്കുന്നില്ല. (*Hear, hear.*) അതു പോകട്ടെ. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ഗവമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ എക്സൈസ് നയം മാറണം. ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ നയം കുറെ പണം ഉണ്ടാക്കണമെന്നാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ —ആക്കു വേണ്ടിയാണു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—എന്തിനായിട്ടാണു് ഇങ്ങിനെ പണം ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നതു്? പണത്തിനു് വേറെ നല്ല വഴികൾ ആലൊചിക്കണം. ഈ വകുപ്പു് ഉടനെ നിർത്തണമെന്നു് വാദിക്കുന്നില്ല. ഭരണം നടത്തികൊണ്ടു് പോകണമെന്നു് ഞങ്ങളും സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു. ഇതു് വലിയ വരവുള്ള ഒരു വകുപ്പാണു്. അതിന്റെ വരവു് പെട്ടെന്നു് വെട്ടിക്കുറക്കുവാൻ ഞങ്ങൾ വരുന്നില്ല. മെമ്പർമാർ ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടതുപോലെ കുറെ കൊല്ലംകൊണ്ടു് ഈ കള്ളു വില്പന തീരെ ഇല്ലാതാക്കുവാനുള്ള നയം ഗവമ്മെണ്ടു സ്വീകരിക്കണം. "ഏറ്റവും അധികം പണവും ഏറ്റവും കുറഞ്ഞ കുടിയും" എന്ന പൊളിഞ്ഞ സിദ്ധാന്തം ഇനി ഗവമ്മെണ്ടു് ഇവിടെ പറയരുതു്. അതു് പൊളിഞ്ഞ ഒരു പ്രമാണമാണെന്നു് സ്ഥാപിച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു. ജൂതമെംബർ പറഞ്ഞതുപോലെ ഈ കൊള്ളാത്ത വരവു് വച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കണമെന്നു് ഏതു ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിനാണ്ടൊ അ ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടു മാത്രമെ ഈ പൊളിഞ്ഞ പ്രമാണം പറയുകയുള്ളു. ജനങ്ങൾ കള്ളു കുടിക്കാതാകണമെങ്കിൽ ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടു് തടയണം. എന്നെ, എനിക്കു് സ്വയം കൊല്ലാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നു് നിയമമുണ്ടാക്കുന്ന ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടു് മദ്യപിച്ചു് ചാകാതെ ചാകുന്നതിനെ തടയാൻ നിയമമുണ്ടാക്കാത്തതു് എന്തുകൊണ്ടു്? കൊല്ലംതോറും ക്രമമായി ഈ വകുപ്പിലെ വരവു കുറച്ചിട്ടു് പകരം വേറെ വരവുണ്ടാക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കണം. അതിനു് പ്രയോഗത്തിൽ വരുത്തിയ ഒരു നിശ്ചിത നയം വേണം മേലാലെങ്കിലും സ്വീകരിക്കുവാൻ. ഇതിനുംപുറമെ ലേഡിമെംബർ, അവരുടെ ബഡ്ജറ്റു് പ്രസംഗത്തിൽ ഈ കാര്യത്തെപറ്റി പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ച അഭിപ്രായം ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടിയിൽ പതിയണംഎന്നും അപേക്ഷ ഉണ്ടു്.

Motion No. 4.

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 32,986 for "item distillery establishment, etc.," by Re. 1.*

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—I had also tabled a motion regarding this and I rise to support the motion. I am not going to reiterate the arguments advanced by the Members of the last Council, nor do I think it would be proper, but it would be platitudinous to speak to all the evils that arise from drink.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

From the general discussion during the last three or four days I have formed an impression about our Government. That impression is that our Government is to be considered as being the best past-masters in the art of appearing to give without actually giving. But in this one respect I can say our Government is too lavish. You can get any quantity of toddy or arrack anywhere in the shops—even at midnight, it is available there.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—After 8 o' clock the shops won't be open.

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—I have seen with my own eyes while I was canvassing for my election. I can say from an economic standpoint the utter ruin that is caused to the masses. Government get 12 lakhs. These 12 lakhs of rupees come from 2 lakhs of people. You will find then that for each member it comes to six or seven rupees, while the total revenue per head comes only to Rs. 7. I, therefore, request the Government to have a sympathetic eye on the poor wage-earner whose total income is only Rs. 52 per year out of which he is spending on drink alone Rs. 7 or 8, the money earned by hard labour in the rich fields in the bright sun and dreary weather. I say it is robbery to strangle his waning purse and take 8 silver barren metals out of Rs.52 to fill up the coffers of the State. It has been said that consistent with the views expressed in the last Council the Government have adopted a policy of maximum revenue from minimum consumption. But from the figures given by the Member for Excise I can say that the increase in taxation has gone up to 25 or 30% whereas the number of liquor shops and the number of trees tapped show only a slight decrease. I do not know the policy adopted by our Government. Why should not the number of shops be reduced and a time-limit imposed. In one respect they are particularly careful, and I do not think the Member for Excise can give a proper answer to my remarks. And not only that. From the answer supplied to the Hon'ble Member for Jews regarding the reduction in the number of shops, I do not think it is consistent with the policy of maximum revenue from minimum consumption. I may also say in this connection that it will be highly demoralising to introduce shops during fairs and festivals. Why should that be allowed unless it be for exacting money from the poor people. I also submit that the practice of locating shops by the side of the roads should be discontinued. If you go by bus from Trichur to Triprayar, you will find more than 15 or 20 shops by the side of the road. Why should they be not located at a distance from the roads? It is a cunning policy of the Government to say that they are following the principle of maximum revenue from

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

minimum consumption. I may also request the Government to appoint a better educated staff. I have seen these peons and aminadars drunk like a Falstaff (*hear, hear.*) or a Bardolf with red nose and sitting in the shops and hearing all the stories and songs of these dealers in liquor who sit spirited like a lark singing merrily. I have seen a number of narrow-necked pots arrayed like an infantry parade in every shop, and whenever these officers find illicit traffic, instead of checking it they knock away some money and let it go. I would request the Government to introduce a more educated staff. Let them be paid amply. The money comes out of our pockets. Why should the Government be so anxious not to appoint a more educated staff? I would also request the Government to fix a time-limit. Of course there is a time-limit even now, but it is not strictly enforced. It should be more strongly enforced. Further there should be a minimum quantity also available for sale in every shop. I would also emphasise the opinion of the Lady Member not to allow women and girls to sell liquor. It is so demoralising. There are some people who are actually attracted to these shops by their presence. You cannot gainsay that. I would request the Government to issue a strong order prohibiting these women and girls sitting in these toddy shops to sell liquor. These are the hot-beds of sin and ruin as I said last time. I also request that the system of local option may be introduced. It may succeed in certain villages. I request the Government to introduce this local option system hereafter.

Motion No. 9.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,84,814 for "votable charges" by Re. 1.*

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, I have also tabled a motion. I will avail myself of this opportunity to say what I have got to say, on this subject. Before doing that, I want some information from the Hon'ble Member for Excise. The Hon'ble Member stated that there is some reduction in the number of shops. May I know whether it was as a result of the deliberate system and policy pursued by the Government or it was only by a mere accident?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—It was not an accident. It is in furtherance of the policy pursued by the Government that the number of shops has been reduced.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Another question which I wish to ask is whether the Government have any idea as to when they will be able to attain complete prohibition.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—We must ask an astrologer.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. V.B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—I have no idea at present.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, I am not at all satisfied nor am I much impressed by all that was said by the Hon'ble Member for Excise regarding the policy of the Government, in this matter. The Hon'ble Member for the Jews said that it affects very vitally the masses. The bulk of our population are labourers and the majority of the people who now drink are drawn from them. All the remedies that have been tried or proposed to be taken by the Government will not solve the real problem. It will not reduce the evil a bit. Sir, take the case of an average labourer. He is generally the bread-earner in a family consisting of five or six souls. He gets on an average, 7 or 8 annas at the most a day. He spends 4 or 5 annas generally and sometimes the whole on drink. The miserable plight of his family of 5 or 6 persons who have to be fed with this prescious balance of two or three annas can better be imagined than described. Sir, this accursed drink is sapping the very life-blood of the nation. It stands against the material and moral progress of the people. We must think out a better remedy to solve this problem. It is really a very grave economic problem. The position taken up by the Government betrays want of imagination and lack of sympathy with the people. You may cry from the house-tops a thousand times that 'our ultimate policy is prohibition, prohibition and prohibition'. What is the use? You yourselves do not know when you will be able to reach that goal. In the meantime the poor people of the State are getting poorer and poorer every day! There is no use saying that we are surrounded by Travancore on one side and British Malabar on the other as though other people who are trying to bring prohibition have not got lands and people surrounding them. Do you wait when your own blood brother or sister is becoming a drunkard, till your neighbours reform themselves? No, Sir, these sorts of excuses won't do. You must think in terms of the masses. People drink because of the condition to which they are reduced. It is the labourers that drink. They are forlorn, uncared for and they take to drink. They are ignorant. They have few social pleasures. They need relaxation and recreation from the hardships of life. If the Government is sincerely anxious to make prohibition a success, they will have to develop the zeal and qualities of a reformer. It will have to take the role of a temperance propagandist. I do admit that non-officials have a lot to do in this matter. Our leaders are indifferent. There are no strong organisations and no activity or initiative in this direction. Our apathy is

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

certainly deplorable. But that is no reason why the Government should not take the initiative in this good cause. It must try to reform the drunkard. It can make a start by appointing better officers, I mean, the aminadars and inspectors, better qualified men, men who will sympathise with the drunkards and will not exploit their weakness.

Again, Sir, the Government can provide some counter-attractions to these people by providing some amusements, etc., and places for labourers to congregate in the evenings. No monetary cost is too great to pay for driving out this drink devil from this land. If properly managed these institutions can be worked with profit.

Sir, I have no faith in the figures that are supplied to us by the Hon'ble Member for Excise. In spite of those figures I refuse to believe that consumption has been reduced. If that were so, how do you account for the fact that these "poor-paid" aminadars are getting fatter and fatter every day out of all proportion to the pay they draw? No, Sir, a lot of illicit traffic in liquor is going on in our State. I know of very many cases in which trees are tapped without license. There are lakhs and lakhs of cocoanut trees in the southern districts, and it is impossible to stop illicit tapping with the present preventive force. Again you give licenses for tapping for sweet toddy and who knows that they are not using it for taking fermented toddy? It is a very delicate process which is very difficult to detect. As a matter of fact this practice is going on on a large scale.

If you have really the interest of the poor at heart, educate them and carry on an intensive temperance propaganda among them. Show them a little more practical sympathy. There is no use saying "we have reduced one shop here and one shop there". Total prohibition may be difficult of achievement in the west. It is the easiest of accomplishment in this country. This evil has attained the status of respectability in the west and may be difficult to deal with. With us, fortunately, drink is sufficiently disrespectable and confined not to the general body of the people but to a minority of the poor classes.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Sir, the Government of Cochin was declaring as even to-day declared on the floor of this House by the Hon'ble Member for Excise, that their Excise policy was maximum price and minimum consumption. Following the footsteps of sister Government institutions in other parts of India how far this policy is worked in practice is a matter which on deep consideration will be found to be not based on actualities. The close location of liquor shops in prominent centres, the opening of new shops on occasions of festivities, the keeping open of shops for late hours at night, the absence of perceptible

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

reduction of the number of trees tapped and other factors too numerous to be mentioned, reveal a state of affairs which may indicate the policy of the Government is maximum consumption with minimum revenue. So I am not going to advocate prohibition total or partial, which may not be pleasing to the Hon'ble Member on the other side. What is the objection to remove these shops to localities where the innocent public may not be troubled so that all parties inclined to enjoy the pleasant drink may be at full liberty to drink merrily?

Mr. V. V. Anantapadmanbha Ayyar.—Sir, I oppose this motion. I beg to submit that at present this motion is uncalled for and unnecessary. The Government has declared its policy that prohibition is to be the ultimate goal. And the Government has been adopting several methods towards attaining this goal. But unfortunately the results have not been as one should have liked it to be. Many methods have been adopted; the number of shops has been reduced, the cost of drinking has been made higher, and in spite of this we find that the drink problem remains unsolved. So the remedy, I beg to submit, lies elsewhere. The Government is not able to cope with the drink problem, by taking measures which have been adopted by it hitherto. I believe that the remedy lies not with the Government but with the people themselves. (*Hear, hear.*) The masses have to be approached, and temperance lessons have to be given to them; the masses have to be made to understand that drink is really an evil and not good. As a matter of fact the lower classes do not at all know that drink is after all productive of any evil. To them it is an actual necessity, and as some people say, taken in legitimate and small quantities, drink is somewhat healthy too. (*Hear, hear.*) I do not want to expatiate about this matter. Therefore, Sir, this motion is uncalled for at present and I strongly oppose it.

Mrs. G. Pavitran.—Just a word I would like to add to what has already been said here on this motion. In doing so, I would be as brief as possible, for I feel that enough has already been said on the subject by the previous speakers. One of the Members pointed out that it is the poor and the uneducated who take to drink most, since they are blissfully ignorant of the danger to which they thus expose themselves. I say for this very same reason, if not for anything else, Government should take upon itself the task of saving the masses by removing this temptation out of their way. Salvation from this could be obtained only by pursuing a policy of 'total prohibition'. Considering the havoc already wrought by this unwholesome practice, a longer lease of life could not on any account be vouchsafed to it. I would, therefore, request the Government once more to adopt the policy

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

of total prohibition, and as a first measure I would request that the sale of liquors by women should at least be put a stop to at once.

മിസ്റ്റർ ഔസേപ്പ് കുണ്ടുകുളം.— ഈ കാര്യത്തെപ്പറ്റി എനിക്കും രണ്ടു ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കുവാനുണ്ട്. ഒന്നാമതായി റോഡ്സിൽനിന്നും ഇത്ര അകലെ മാത്രമെ ഷാപ്പുകൾ വയ്ക്കാവൂ എന്നു് വല്ല നിബന്ധനകളും പാസ്സാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ടോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ.—അങ്ങനെ നിയമങ്ങളൊന്നുമില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ ഔസേപ്പ് കുണ്ടുകുളം.—സർ, ഇപ്പോഴുള്ള ഷാപ്പുകൾ റോഡിൽനിന്നും മൂന്നോ നാലോ ദണ്ഡിൽ കൂടുതൽ അകലം വരുമെന്നു് എന്റെ അറിവിൽ പെട്ടിടത്തോളം കാണുന്നില്ല. അതുമാത്രമല്ല, ഓരോ നാട്ടിലും പ്രധാനവഴികളുടെ ഒരുഅറ്റത്താണു് ഈ മനുഷ്യരെ നശിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഷാപ്പുകൾ ഉപ്പോൾ സ്ഥാപിച്ചു നടത്തിവരുന്നതു്. ഇതു വലിയ അസൌകര്യങ്ങൾ പലപ്പോഴും യാത്രക്കാർക്കുണ്ടാക്കുന്നു. ജനങ്ങൾ സഞ്ചരിക്കുന്ന വെട്ടുവഴികളിൽ നിന്നു് നാലോ അഞ്ചോ ദണ്ഡു് അകറ്റി ഇവ സ്ഥാപിച്ചാൽ എന്തുദോഷമാണു് വരുവാനുള്ളതു? വെട്ടുവഴികളുടെ അറ്റത്തു സ്ഥാപിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് കുടിയന്മാർ കുടിച്ചിട്ടു് റോഡിൽ കുടി നില്ക്കുന്നുണ്ടാകും. വണ്ടികളോ വല്ലതും അതിലെപോകാൻവന്നാൽ—കാളവണ്ടിയാണെങ്കിൽ അതും ഒട്ടും നീങ്ങുകയില്ല; അവിടെ നില്ക്കുന്നവരുടെ സൌകര്യം നോക്കി പൊയിക്കൊള്ളണം. മോട്ടോർകാറായാൽ അതു് കുറെഹോൺഅടിച്ചാലൊഅല്ലെങ്കിൽ അതിനകത്തുവല്ല തലപ്പാവുകാരിരീക്കുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ അവരെ കണ്ടെങ്കിലുമൊ മാറിനിന്നു എന്നുവരാം.—ഉള്ളവിഷമം കുറച്ചൊന്നുമല്ല. തോളൂർ, ചാലക്കൽ, ചിറ്റിലപ്പിള്ളി, അഞ്ഞൂർ, പെരുമങ്ങലം എന്ന സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ഈ മാതിരികഥ പലപ്പോഴും ഉണ്ടാകുന്നുണ്ടു്. അതു് എന്റെ സ്വന്തം നാട്ടിലാണു്. ആ നാട്ടുകാര്യംകൂടാതെ എന്റെ അനുഭവത്തിലുള്ള കൊട്ടക്കാടു്. മുതലായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ഞാൻ യാത്രചെയ്യുമ്പോഴും അവിടേയും കാണുവാനിടയായതു് ഈ സമ്പ്രദായം തന്നെയാണു്. വെട്ടുവഴികളിൽനിന്നും കുറെ അകറ്റി വച്ചാൽ പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കു് ഇപ്പോഴുണ്ടാകുന്ന ഗതാഗതാസൌകര്യം കൂടാതെ കഴിക്കാമായിരുന്നു. ഗവ മെന്റിനു് പലസംഗതികൾക്കും പല നിയമങ്ങളും പറഞ്ഞുവരുന്നുണ്ടു് ആ നിയമങ്ങൾ എല്ലാം നടക്കുന്നുണ്ടൊ എന്നു് പരിശോധിച്ചിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ കുറെ ഫലം ഉണ്ടാകുമായിരുന്നു. നിയമങ്ങൾ കടലാസ്സിൽ എഴുതിവെച്ചതുകൊണ്ടൊ പറഞ്ഞു നടന്നതുകൊണ്ടൊ ആയില്ല. അവ നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്തുകയും അപ്രകാരം ചെയ്യുകയുണ്ടായാൽ ശരിയായി നടക്കുന്നുണ്ടൊ എന്നു് അന്വേഷിക്കയും

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

ചെയ്യാതെ കായ്ങ്ങളൊന്നും പൊവ്വെനടക്കുമെന്ന് കരുതുന്നതു് അബദ്ധമാണു്. ഷാപ്പുകൾ രാത്രി എട്ടുമണിക്കുശേഷം പൂട്ടണമെന്നും വില്പന നടത്താൻ പാടില്ലെന്നും നിർബ്ബന്ധതയുള്ളതായി ഗവമ്മെണ്ടുഭാഗത്തുനിന്നുതന്നെ പറഞ്ഞുകഴിഞ്ഞു. ആ നിയമം വന്നതിനുശേഷം മറ്റുമെംബർമാർ പറഞ്ഞതുപോലെ എത്ര കേസ്സുകൾ ഈ ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെണ്ടിൽനിന്നും ഫയൽചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു് എനിക്കു് മനസ്സിലാകുന്നില്ല. രാത്രി വൈകുന്നേരം ഷാപ്പുകൾ അടയ്ക്കാതിരിക്കുന്നതു കണ്ടുപിടിച്ചു എത്രകേസ്സുകൾ ഫയൽചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു് എക്സൈസ് മെംബർ പറഞ്ഞാൽകൊള്ളാം.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. ബി. വൈദ്യനാഥയ്യർ.—തിട്ടപ്പെടുവാൻ നിവർത്തിയില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ ഒസേപ്പു് കണ്ടുകുളം.—തീർച്ചയില്ല! ഇതിനും പുറമെ കൊച്ചുകുട്ടികൾക്കും സ്ത്രീകൾക്കും ഇവ വിറ്റുകൂടെന്നും നിയമമുള്ളതായി എക്സൈസ് മെംബർതന്നെ സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു. അതിന്റെഫലവും മുമ്പുപറഞ്ഞപ്രകാരം തന്നെയാണു്. അനേഷിച്ചെങ്കിലല്ലെ കുറ്റം കണ്ടുപിടിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുകയുള്ളു? നിബന്ധനകളൊക്കെ ഉണ്ടാക്കിവെയ്ക്കുക. കടലാസ്സിൽ വായിച്ചുനോക്കിയാൽകാണാം. ചോദിച്ചാൽ നിയമം ഉണ്ടെന്നു് പറയുകയും ചെയ്യാം. അതുപോരെ? ഒരു നിയമം ഉണ്ടാക്കിയാൽ അതു നടപ്പിൽ വരുന്നതിനുവേണ്ടി നമ്മുടെ ഗവമ്മെണ്ടു് യാതൊരു പ്രയത്നവും ഇതേവരെചെയ്തുകാണുന്നില്ല .(*Hear, hear.*) അതു് നല്ല ഒരു ആദർശമാണെന്നു പറയുവാനൊ അഭിമാനിക്കുവാനൊ തരമില്ല. ആ നിയമത്തിന്റെ ഫലം ഇന്നത്തെ സ്ഥിതിക്കു് പ്രജകൾക്കു് അനുഭവിക്കാൻ തരമാകുന്നില്ല. ഇക്കാര്യം ഇവിടെ അവസാനിക്കട്ടെ.

കള്ളിനായി ചെത്തുന്ന തെങ്ങുകളുടെ എണ്ണം വളരെ കുറഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു് ഗവമ്മെണ്ടു് അഭിമാനത്തോടെ പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. അങ്ങനെ കുറയാൻ കായ്യം വേറെ ഒന്നും അല്ല. ചക്കര ഉണ്ടാക്കാൻ ലൈസൻസ്സു കൂടാതെ തെങ്ങു ചെത്താം. ആ തെങ്ങിൽ നിന്നും എടുക്കുന്ന കള്ളു് ഷാപ്പുകളിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നു. അങ്ങിനെ ആയാൽ ലൈസൻസ്സു എടുക്കുക എന്ന നഷ്ടം ഉണ്ടാകയുമില്ല. കള്ളിനും കുറവില്ല. ഇതാണു് ഇന്നു് ഈ വകയ്ക്കായി ചെത്തുന്ന തെങ്ങുകളുടെ കുറവിനുള്ള പ്രധാനവും ഒന്നാമതായുമുള്ള കാരണം. ഇതിൽ നടക്കുന്ന അഴിമതികളെപ്പറ്റി വല്ലപ്പോഴുമൊരിക്കലെങ്കിലും അനേഷിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടൊ എന്നു ഞാൻ ചോദിക്കുന്നതിനേക്കാൾ മൌനം ദീക്ഷിക്കുന്നതാണു് നല്ലതു്. ചക്കരക്കള്ളു കൂട്ടു ചേർക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു കുടിക്കാനും ആൾ കുറയും. ചാരായം ചില്ലറവു കൂടിയും കാണാം. കള്ളു വില്പനയോ ചാരായ വില്പനയൊ തീരെ നിറുത്തണം എന്നു് ഞാൻ പറയുന്നില്ല. അങ്ങിനെ നിറുത്തുന്നതായാൽ വിദേശ ലഹരിപദാർത്ഥങ്ങൾക്കു വി

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

ല കൂട്ടുകയും നമ്മുടെ പണം അന്യനാട്ടുകാർ കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നതിനു ഇടയാകുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നതാകുന്നു. അല്ലാതെ തീരെ പെട്ടെന്നു നിർത്തുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് യാതൊരു ഗുണവും ഉണ്ടാവുകയില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ഗവമ്മെണ്ടിൽ നിന്നും ക്രമമായി കുറച്ചുകൊണ്ടു വരുവാൻ തക്ക ചില നിശ്ചിത നിയമങ്ങൾ വയ്ക്കണം. അവ നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്താൻ ഉറച്ച ശ്രമിക്കണം. ഇങ്ങനെ അല്ലാതെ മദ്യനിരോധനം നടപ്പിൽ വരുവാനൊ സാധുക്കളെ ദാരിദ്ര്യത്തിൽ നിന്നും രക്ഷിക്കുവാനൊ ഗവമ്മെണ്ടു് ശക്തമാവുകയില്ല. എന്നാലും ഗവമ്മെണ്ടിനെക്കൊണ്ടു മാത്രം നടക്കുകയുമില്ല. നാട്ടുകാരുടേയും. കൂടി ഉത്സാഹവും അധികം വേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ടു് വിദ്യാഭ്യാസമുള്ളവരും ഇവിടത്തെ മെംബറന്മാരും നാട്ടുകാരെ വിളിച്ചുകൂട്ടി പ്രസംഗശാലകളും വായനശാലകളും ഏർപ്പെടുത്തി. ഇതിന്റെ ദുഷ്യത്തെ ജനങ്ങളെ മനസ്സിലാക്കി സ്വയം ഇതിനെ ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുവാനുള്ള ഒരു മനസ്ഥിതി അവരിൽ വരുത്തുവാൻ ശ്രമിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഞാൻ Mrs. Henrywoodന്റെ Danesbury House എന്ന ഒരു പുസ്തകം വായിച്ചപ്പോൾ Parieslivery എന്നാൽ പബ്ലിക് ഉല്ലാസസ്ഥലങ്ങൾ നിർമ്മിച്ചു ജനങ്ങൾ കൂടിയിൽ വിനിയോഗിക്കുന്ന സമയം പത്ര വായന, ഉല്ലാസക്കളികൾ ഈ വകകളിൽ വിനിയോഗിപ്പിച്ചു് ജനങ്ങളെ ഇതിൽ നിന്നും മോചിപ്പിക്കുവാനുള്ള വഴികൾ നോക്കിയതായി അറിയാനിടവന്നു. സാധിക്കുമെന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ ആ മാതിരി സ്ഥാപനങ്ങൾ ഇവിടേയും ഉണ്ടാക്കി ഷാപ്പിൽ പോകേണ്ട സമയം പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ വായിച്ചും, ഉല്ലസിച്ചും ഇരുന്നാൽ സമയം പോകുന്നതു അറിയുകയില്ല. കുടിക്കാൻ പോകണമെന്ന വിചാരം ഉല്ലാസവും വായനയും കൊണ്ടു് നീങ്ങിക്കൊള്ളുകയും ചെയ്യും. അതു ഗവമ്മെണ്ടും ജനങ്ങളും ഒത്തൊരുമിച്ചു് പ്രവർത്തിക്കേണ്ടതാകുന്നു.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ.—ജനങ്ങൾ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നില്ലെന്നാണൊ മെമ്പർ പറയുന്നതു?

Mr. S. S. Koder.—Sir, many Members here said at the beginning that they were dissatisfied with what the Member for Excise had said. I am also not quite satisfied with all what the Members have said (*hear, hear*). I will point out that the money of the poor is being brought to the Government coffers as it is the poor who drink more to-day. The Governments' policy is maximum revenue and minimum consumption. When we look into the consumption, we don't see it coming to minimum. We see it always increased, but you at the same time take your maximum revenue. Again, the Member for Excise is going to raise the duty next year. I say it is inequitous. Whose money you are going to take? You are going to take from the people who

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

are poor. By taking the money of the poor, what benefit is there? I say not to raise the duty at all. Keep to your own present policy. Some say drink is an evil. Perhaps it is evil, but there is a limit. We have heard Members say about Japan, America, Bhopal and Germany propaganding total prohibition. We need not go so far. If we go to Mahe or Pondicherri, we can get a bottle of brandy for half or quarter of the price at which it is sold here. What are the crimes there ? Are they in any way greater or less than in our State ? Nobody knows anything about that. I will tell you an instance. About the year 1913 in British India the duty for a case of twelve bottles of brandy was seven or eight rupees. Now it is thirty or thirty-two rupees and the consumption is not less.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—We take your word.

Mr. S. S. Koder.—I do not know whether the Members know why the shop is kept near the road-side. The idea in British India that the shops should be near the road-side is that respectable gentlemen will not go in there. They easily could get into the shop if they were placed apart from the road-side, *i. e.*, in the country side. And that will increase the consumption of the liquor. I, therefore, request that the tax might not be raised.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—Allow them to drink?

Mr. S. S. Koder.—That is so much the better.

Rao Bahadur Mr. John Kuriyan.—May I say a few words? Some people said that propaganda should be started to stop consumption. I would like to say that there is physical basis for the craving for alcohol. The local Sanitary Officer is here, and he will tell that alcohol stimulates the secretion of gastric juice. And this gastric juice is the secretion in the body which digests meat and other proteid foods. Therefore, a man who takes to drink wants a meat diet. If you go into any drink-shop, you can see there is always some meat preparation sold along with the liquor. Conversely, a man who takes a meat diet gets a craving for alcohol. If people, who by caste or creed or custom are not alcohol drinkers, take to drink, they soon begin to take meat. If they begin with meat, they go to alcohol. Therefore, if vegetarianism is encouraged, that is a great preventive of drinking habits. Apart from such propaganda work, vegetarianism spreads as a result of economical reasons. The area wanted to produce one ton of beef will produce ten or twenty times that quantity of corn. The spread of vegetarianism is the best means of lessening the consumption of alcohol.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—I would like to repeat a couplet, which I had studied some 35 years ago:—

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

"There is a little liquor shop that all can close.
It is that littleliquor shop just beneath your nose".

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—With the permission of the House I beg to withdraw the motion, and in doing so, I wish to impress the Government about the necessity of seeing that shops are closed at 8 p. m. sharp. As a matter of fact, they keep the shops open now till 12 p. m. against all rules.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—No such case has come to my notice, and if some would have come to me, I would have taken action against them.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—For the information of the Government I do assert that some of these "Devil's dens" are kept open till midnight in the village parts. The unwholesome way this is sold by girls has already been emphasised by the Lady Member, and that also has to be stopped at once. I don't agree with the Hon'ble Member for Mattancheri that the price of the country liquor ought not to be increased. In my opinion it ought to be made as dear as possible so that the habit of drinking may be deadened. I don't press the motion.

(*The motion was, with leave, withdrawn.*)

Motions Nos. 5—8.

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,08,650 for item "Taluk Establishment" by Re. 1.*

Mr. M. K. Raman.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 4,000 for "transport of Opium and Ganja" by Rs. 1,500.*

Mr. M. K. Raman.—*To omit Rs. 252 for "Boat Establishment".*

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,84,814 for "votable charges" by Re. 1.*

President.—Motion No. 5 by Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.

Mr. C. V. Kuriyan.—I don't press this motion also.

(*Hence it was considered withdrawn.*)

President.—Motion No. 6 and 7 by Mr. M. K. Raman, absent.

(*Hence they were deemed withdrawn.*)

Motion No. 8.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,84,814 for "votable charges" by Re. 1.*

President.—Motion No. 8 by Mr. A. Eachara Menon.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—I don't wish to move. But I should like to have some information from the Government. How many permits were issued to carry on to bocco?

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.— Idon't quite remembe. When anybody applies for it, I am bound to give.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—I tabled this motion to bring to the notice of the Government the customary rule in issuing permits for carrying tobacco through Cochin State. In Chittur there is one person who goes to the Excise Superintendent's office on a day and takes a few permits and sells it there making thereby an income of about one thousand rupees per annum. He sells it at four annas to eight annas. That also is no matter. For the poor people that carts tobacco, it is not possible for every time to go to the Excise office and get a permit every time. If it is possible for the Government to appoint a man to sell this, nobody will grudge to pay four annas, but all will be too glad in such an appointment. So, I earnestly request that something might be done in regard to this, *i e.*, the issue of permits. I withdraw the motion.

(*The motion was, with leave, withdrawn.*)

Motion No. 10.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—*To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 3,00,000 under Demand No. VI by Rs. 100.*

President.—Motion No. 10 by Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—I don't press.

(*Hence it was considered withdrawn.*)

President.—The question before the House is that a sum of rupees 2,84,814 under Demand No. VI Excise be granted.

Question put and agreed to.

President.—The Land Revenue Member will not be present here, because he has to attend a very urgent and important Conservancy Board meeting. If the demand tabled for to-day would not come up for discussion to-day, it will be adjourned to Thursday after-noon. And Thursday evening I shall have, as in duty bound, to make use of Rule 49 (3).

Demand No. VIII—Customs—Rs. 4,700.

Mr. V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar.—Customs Demand is not moved and passed. The demand contains the whole amount. It is on page 29, Demand No. VIII.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—There is no cut motion, and so it may be formally put and carried.

President.—The question before the House is that a sum of rupees 4,700 under Demand No. VIII—Customs be granted by the House.

Question put and agreed to.

Demand No. XVIII—Education—Rs. 12,01,166.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Sir, before moving for the grant under Education, I should like to make a few explanatory remarks regarding certain points that came up in the course of the general discussion. I should have done this on an earlier

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly